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COLONEL THOMAS CUTTS

"I thought he looked like a good man."

# COLONEL THOMAS CUTTS

## SACO'S MOST EMINENT CITIZEN IN THE COUNTRY'S EARLY DAYS

BORN 1736 ; DIED 1821 — WEST INDIA MERCHANT,  
SHIP OWNER, FOUNDER OF INDUSTRIES — MILI-  
TARY LEADER, TOWN OFFICER, MEMBER OF  
LEGISLATURE AND OF GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL —  
A FOUNDER OF THORNTON ACADEMY AND ITS  
FIRST PRESIDENT OF TRUSTEES — OVERSEER  
OF BOWDOIN COLLEGE — FRIEND OF LEARNING

BY

GEORGE ADDISON EMERY

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READ BEFORE THE MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOVEMBER 20, 1912

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## COLONEL THOMAS CUTTS

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ABOUT 1645 there came from the west of England to the Isles of Shoals, at that time a great fishing resort, and then to Portsmouth (then called Strawberry Bank on the Piscataqua), two young men, John and Richard Cutt. They were joined later by a brother, Robert, and a sister, Anne Cutt, who married John Shipway, a merchant of Strawberry Bank.

It is impossible now to say with certainty from what particular point in England they came, or to give any positive statement as to their parentage.

Traditionally, their father was Richard Cutts, Esq., of Grondale Abbey, Essex County, an adherent of Cromwell; he married a widow by the name of Shelton, who, it is said, by him and her former husband had twenty-three children, all living at the same time. The young men dropped the final letter in their name, calling it Cutt, when they emigrated to this country.

The first brother, John, lived at Portsmouth. He became a member of the Council for Government of the Province, and in 1679 he was appointed by the Crown its first President. His name was written Cutts in his letters-patent. John's and Richard's estate in Portsmouth covered two-thirds of what is now the compact part of the city. John's second wife was Ursula Cutt, who after his death was killed by the Indians in July, 1694. Madam Ursula was murdered in her own meadow where she had gone with a maid-servant to carry refreshments to her men in the hay-fields, when she and her haymakers were shot down and scalped.

Robert Cutt, the third brother and the great-grandfather of Col. Thomas Cutts, came to this country several years after John and Richard. He went after a time to the Barbadoes and was probably connected with his brothers in business, receiving fish and lumber, and shipping West Indies goods in return. He finally returned to Portsmouth, moved across the river to Kittery and "built a large number of vessels."

His son, Richard Cutt, owned and lived on Cutts Island, Kittery. Besides this large island, Richard had acquired a fine estate from his father (Robert) and was a man of wealth and repute. In the years 1694-5-7-8-9-1700-6 he served as selectman of Kittery.

Major Richard Cutt, the son of Richard Cutt and the father of Col. Thomas Cutts, was a man of great distinction in the Province. In 1745, at the time of the expedition to Louisburg, he was commissioned Major in Sir Wm. Pepperrell's regiment. He was in the Legislature of Massachusetts as a Councillor from 1755 to 1762. He also served as special justice of the Court of Common Pleas, as his father did before him. His residence was on Cutts Island, Kittery, where he and his wife entertained in a truly "hospitable and elegant manner all the noted men of the day." While many of the stories of his style of entertaining are exaggerated, there is no doubt he had a luxurious home for those times and entertained freely.

On the eighth of April, 1724, he signed a petition in which is set forth that "A house is lately made defenceable near y<sup>e</sup> head of York River, built by Mr. Robert Cutt for security against the Indians, and the Lt. Gov'r. is humbly requested to have six or eight soldiers posted there." Among others who signed it were Wm. Pepperrell and Wm. Pepperrell Jr. He was selectman in Kittery from 1732 with few exceptions till 1776. He was deacon of a church and is often spoken of in old records as "Deacon Richard Cutt."

Madam Wood, the first novelist in Maine, speaking of the time of Major Cutts, says:

Cutts Island and a large tract of land in Kittery formed a domain almost lordly. The family resided on the Island, which was connected with the mainland by a drawbridge which was taken up every evening for the safety of the inhabitants and let down in the morning to permit the workmen and retainers of the estate to attend to their usual duties. They kept thirty cows and several hundred sheep, and had a large old-fashioned house, one apartment of which was long and large enough to dine fifty or sixty guests.

The arms of the Cutts with quarterings innumerable were carved over the immense fire-places, the mantel of which was adorned with colored glass and two silver branches for candles. The floor was daily rubbed with wax till it became like a nice mahogany table. The walls were ornamented with paintings and work of the daughters, and the six dozen pewter plates bore upon their edge the crest of the family. The daughters were sent to the best schools and taught not only dancing, music and embroidery, but one day in every week was devoted to the manufacture of cake and pastry, the latter being as light as a feather and white as snow.

Returning from school with the daughter of Gov. Vaughan, one of the Miss Cutts was detained a day and two nights at Portsmouth and saw at the Governor's, tea for the first time. "I did not know," said she, on her

return, "how to act, but waited until I saw Miss Vaughan turn out the tea and after adding sugar and cream, raise the cup to her lips and then I followed her example." She purchased her mother a pound of the tea, for which she paid a guinea, and sent to Boston for a set of China.

When at home the young ladies assisted in spinning, attended to the dairy and oversaw the cooking.

Mrs. Cutts herself always skimmed her own milk and instructed her dairy maids in the quantity of the rennet for the cheese. They made two every day and churned every morning. They kept a pleasure boat and every young lady had a horse and side saddle of her own. They kept a steward and a butler and once a year gave a grand entertainment, to which only the highest were invited.

Invitations were sent a week in advance and the whole week devoted to preparation. Extra help was secured and Billy Ball was engaged for the whole day with his fiddle. Flowers or plants from Lady Ursula's garden, which she had brought from England, had been set out. The fiddler and drummer were close by the landing to welcome the guests with "God Save the King."

Madam Wood then gives a vivid account of the dinner:

They had a pig roasted whole, called a barbecue, and fish that were caught and cooked immediately, with chickens, ham and tongues, everything being raised upon the island except sugar, wine and spirits.

On the centre of the table was a silver tub that would hold four gallons full of pancakes, rising from its rich and polished sides like an immense snowdrift, for it was covered from the base to the attic with powdered sugar. A floating island, representing a ship in the sea, was stationed a little below, etc.

Col. Cutt, the subject of this paper, was for a long time one of the most eminent merchants in Maine (Folsom says), and from humble circumstances he, like all his ancestors in this country, rose to great wealth, the reward of long continued and successful effort. Thomas was the youngest but one of ten children. He served a clerkship with Sir Wm. Pepperrell, and, though very young, was entrusted with important business. Sir Wm's. son-in-law (Sparhawk), in letters to him, shows great confidence in his judgment and ability. He then commenced business in Kittery but was unfortunate in his first enterprise and about 1758 came to Saco.

He was then twenty-two years old and had only one hundred dollars, which he had borrowed of his father. It is worthy of mention that, as soon as he was able, he paid back to his father what he owed him. He commenced trading in a small way, first in a room in Dr. White's house at the foot of Wharf Hill. He practised the closest economy, doing his own cooking and thus saving the expense of board. He had an unusual aptitude for business (Folsom says), and in a short time enlarged his capital and became engaged in lucrative and extensive transactions.

Indian or Bonython Island was then covered with oaks and was frequented by friendly Indians during the fishing season. At this time and long after, the river was alive with salmon, there being no dams or mills to trouble the free passage of fish. In fact, salmon were so plenty that laborers stipulated, when hired out, that they should not be required to eat salmon more than twice a week.

Col. Cutt was the first to appreciate the advantages of the island which was afterwards named Cutt's Island and is now known as Factory Island.

In 1759 he purchased a small undivided part for ninety dollars and soon afterwards built a small house with conveniences for a store, just in the rear of the York Manufacturing Company's coal office. This is standing now.

A bridge was thrown across the river on the Saco side not far above the location of the present Main Street crossing, and a ferry from Col. Cutt's established to Allen's wharf. The old ferry was from Sir Wm. Pepperrell's wharf and store, situated where the Biddeford & Saco Coal Company's coal shed is now, to Luques' wharf. This new arrangement shortened the ferriage and became the popular route to Biddeford.

Col. Cutt was very soon reaping the advantages of his judicious selection, and, in addition to the business of his store, engaged in shipbuilding and navigation. He was soon compelled to secure a larger store.

His old store was occupied years ago by Capt. Nathaniel Fernald as a sail loft and afterwards by the York Manufacturing Company as a waste house and later as a stable.

Sir Wm. Pepperrell having come into possession of one half of the Island, this portion of it was purchased by Col. Cutt for eleven hundred dollars in 1775. This explodes the old story that it was purchased of the Indians for rum. He also purchased small portions of the island of Sellea and McIntire, and of the Berry and Scamman heirs. After this, Col. Cutt, Amos Chase, Thomas Gilpatric and Benjamin Nason built a bridge from the southwest side of the island to Allen's (now Luques') wharf, which was met with much opposition from Col. Tyng, who owned the old Ferry but the people were much pleased with the new departure. These gentlemen passed around a subscription paper, a copy of which follows and which may be interesting:

Whereas a good Bridge over the Western Branch of Saco River at or near the place where the Ferry is kept, there would be greatly serviceable to the Public and would much facilitate the Travelling to and from the Eastward parts of the Province, and whereas Benj<sup>n</sup> Nason & Thomas Gil-

patriek of Biddeford & Amos Chase & Thomas Cutt of Pepperrellboro, All in the County of York, hath undertaken to build the same with a Laudable Zeal for the Public Good — and we the subscribers being willing to promote a work of so general and extensive usefulness, Do hereby for our selves Severally and Respectively Promise and Engage to the said Benj<sup>a</sup> Nason, Thomas Gilpatrick, Amos Chase & Thomas Cutt to pay them the particular and several sums herein affixed and carried out against our names hereunto subscribed with our hands, always provided the said Benj<sup>a</sup> Nason, Thoms Gilpatrick, Amos Chase & Thos Cutt do within nine months from this time give bond to the Treasurer for the County of York and to his successors in said office in the sum of Two Thousand Pounds Lawful Money that they will truly and faithfully apply the money, work or other articles subscribed as aforesaid and which shall be paid to them for the purpose of building the bridge aforesaid and that they will within nine months from this time proceed on the said work and continue the same until a good and sufficient bridge is built as aforesaid —

And whereas there may be much money & other value given or paid to the said Benj<sup>a</sup> Nason, Thoms Gilpatrick, Amos Chase & Thos Cutt in a more private or some other manner than by a subscription that the said Benj<sup>a</sup> Nason, Thoms Gilpatrick, Amos Chase and Thos Cutt shall also become bound and obliged as aforesaid to apply what may be received in any manner whatever on account of said Bridge to the use aforesaid.

Witness our hands at Biddeford Oct. 20, 1766.

Nathaniel Sparhawk for himself & family one half when the bridge is begun & the other half at the Completing of it One Hundred Dollars in the whole.

Benj Hooper	Six Pounds Thirteen Shillings 4P.
Joseph Terbon	Ten Dollars
Samuel Seavey	Ten Dollars
William Cole	One Thousand Four Inch Plank.
John Dyer	fifteen hundred of Four Inch Plank.

There are also many other contributors of money, work, etc. Col. Cutt subscribed himself Twenty Dollars.

The original subscription paper is in the possession of B. N. Goodale.

This bridge (called the Proprietors' bridge) was carried away in the great freshet of 1785, but was promptly rebuilt by Col. Cutt.

As soon as the bridge was built, Col. Cutt's business increased still more rapidly. His store became the largest and most successful in town, and he engaged more extensively in navigation and up to the time of the Revolutionary war carried on a very profitable lumber trade with the West Indies.

At that time Pepperell Square and the surrounding land to the wharf was a swamp and was used as a place or yard for the storage of lumber.

It was said the Colonel netted \$100,000 at one time on molasses, for which he had exchanged lumber, which arrived just after the war of the Revolution began, when the market was very high.

¶ August 24, 1762, he was married by Rev. Mr. Moses Morrill to Elizabeth, daughter of Dominicus Seaman. She was born in March, 1745, and died Jan. 10, 1803. As there were no carriages in those days, Mr. Cutt and his lady rode horseback to the parson's, the lady on a pillion behind him, and they returned in the same manner. The mail carrier at that time, in this section at least, rode horseback, occasionally taking a passenger on a pillion.

Mr. Seth Storer when a very old man (he died in Scarborough) said the first four-wheeled carriage he ever saw was the mail coach from Portsmouth to Portland put on the route by Enoch Paine about 1790, twenty-eight years after Col. Cutt was married. In 1796 the custom of blowing the horn was inaugurated, to give teamsters notice to turn out for the mail. If not done at once, Mr. Storer said, the passengers would turn out and turn over the offender. Sailors and rough men enjoyed the fun of capsizing any one who obstructed the U. S. Mail. Deacon Amos Chase of Saco is said to have driven the first pair of wheels, a cart, from Kennebunk to Saco, prior to 1787. Daniel E. Owen in "Old Times in Saco" says Deacon Chase enjoyed the distinction of driving the first chaise from Kennebunk to Saco. Marshal Thos. G. Thornton had the first fancy finished chaise in Saco.

But to return to the bride whom we left unceremoniously on her wedding day. She is described as a tall, well proportioned lady, with a strong face but not handsome. A full length panel picture of her and one of the Colonel are in York Institute. Her riding hood of black satin, lined with white satin is also in the Institute. Mrs. Cutts was kind to the worthy poor and was much loved by them. She was reserved and dignified, but very ladylike. In the painting she holds a snuff-box in her hand.

Mr. Cutt continued to occupy the small house at the foot of the hill for twenty years, and all but the youngest of his children were born there.

In 1782 he moved to the mansion he had built at the top of the hill, where Mr. Ernest L. Morrill now lives. From this fine location he could see his many vessels as they came in and went out of the harbor. Gov. Fairfield says in his "Trip to the Pool" that "on either side of the road fronting the mansion-house, were two fields formerly known under the significant sobriquet of the Colonel's vest pockets. One of them is now a brick yard, and the other is covered with factories. The Colonel, if permitted to revisit us, would probably be not a little puzzled in regard to his identity, finding his 'pockets'



COLONEL CUTTS' EARLY DWELLING AND STORE



one with clay and bricks, the other with spindles and pretty girls."

Of course all supplies or nearly all came by water in those days, as there were no railroads. I have been told that twenty or thirty vessels have been in port at one time — many of them making regular trips to and from Saco, and bringing cargoes from home and foreign ports. The noted sea captains, Coit, Storer and Samuel Hartley, commanded the Colonel's vessels.

One of the first bridges across the river was known as the "Lottery Bridge." A commission was issued by the General Court to Sir Wm. Pepperrell and others empowering them to set up a lottery to procure funds to build the bridge. The price of tickets was two dollars. The highest prize, one thousand dollars, was drawn by Ebenezer Ayer.

People in those days seem to have approved of lotteries if the money obtained was devoted to some good object, but this was before Col. Cutt's day. The "Lottery Bridge" was washed away by a freshet. Col. Cutt then built another, the town contributing one hundred pounds, and a toll was taken from strangers. This bridge lasted for twenty years, when he built again.

He also with others built another bridge on the other side (towards Biddeford) as I have stated. This too was a toll bridge for a time.

The Colonel was an earnest advocate of the war of the Revolution, although he suffered heavy losses thereby.

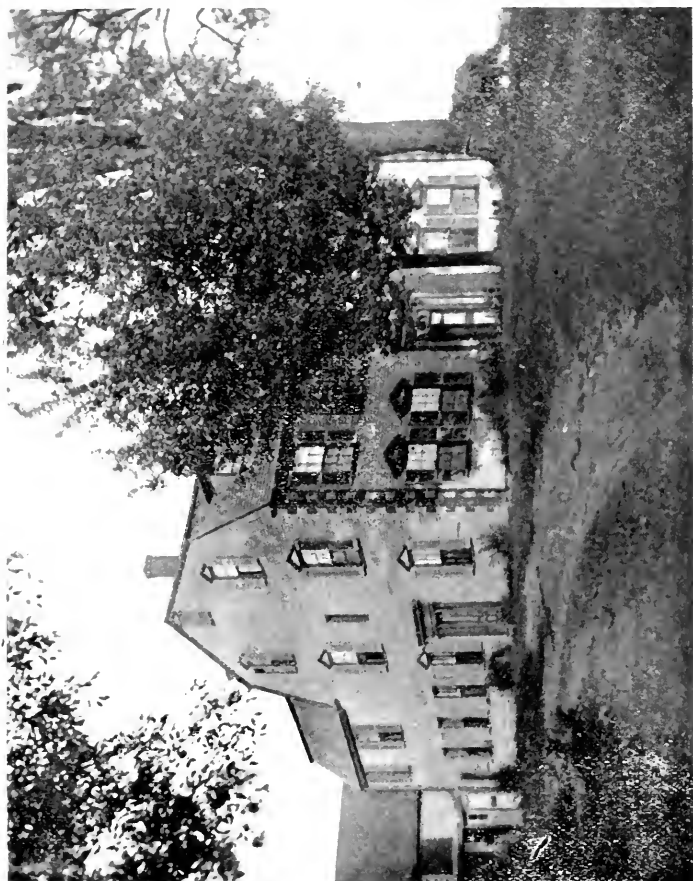
The travel over the bridges was so light that they were temporarily thrown open to the public during the war.

Mr. Cutt not only owned the Island but large tracts of land. He bought a portion of the Great Lot, so-called, of Sir Wm. Pepperrell, about twelve hundred acres, and also about one thousand additional acres of land valued by his appraisers, with the six houses and five barns on it, at \$20,450. He also purchased the Pepperrell half of the saw-mill.

He had oxen, horses, and other stock on his farms, and some were let at the halves. I have been told that one farmer's wife brought him at one time two little kittens, being one-half of the increase of farm stock. He owned many farms, and it was said he could go to Canada with his own conveyances and sleep in his own house every night.

His appraisers mention eighty-four pieces of real estate, appraised in all at \$96,626. This valuation seems low. For instance, the mansion house, etc. etc. (see inventory), is appraised at only \$6,000. In the list appear wharves and





MANSION OF COLONEL CUTTS



the Power vested in us, We do by these presents, (reposing special Trust and confidence in your Loyalty, Courage, and good Conduct) Commission you accordingly, [etc., etc.] and you are yourself to follow such Orders & Instructions as you shall from time to time receive from the major part of the Council or your superior officers.

Given under our hands and the seal of the said Colony, at Watertowne the Fourteenth day of February in the sixteenth year of the Reign of his Majesty King George the Third, Anno Domini, 1776.

By the command of the Major Part of the Council.

[Signed on the margin by  
fifteen councillors.]

Perez Morton D. Seery

Major Cutt made oath March 6, 1776, that he would faithfully perform the duties of his office before

Tristram Jordan	} Field Officers.
Joseph Storer	

Another commission in similar form signed by fifteen of the Council, dated June 9th, 1778 (at Watertown), appoints him Colonel of the same regiment (the Third) of Militia. This commission runs to Thomas Cutts.

The Colonel was about five feet, ten inches in height and was fleshy. The silhouette in Mr. Owen's book is said to be a good likeness.

Mr. Storer said, "He was a man of humor, pretty funny with his men, but had a queer way of showing it. He always looked very serious indeed."

Col. Cutts, as we have seen, did an enormous business. He had stores, vessels, saw and grist mills, toll bridges, farms, etc., and gave employment to a large number of men. To facilitate all this business he, with others, organized Saco Bank with a capital of \$100,000. This bank was first located in the office of Marshal Thomas G. Thornton (for whom Thornton Academy was named), who was Col. Cutts' son-in-law, having married his daughter Sarah, and remained there until the bank building was erected on the corner of Main and Pleasant Streets on the site now occupied by the Saco and Biddeford Savings Institution. The Colonel was succeeded in 1811 as President by Marshal Thornton, who held the office until his death, which occurred March 4, 1824. The charter expired in October, 1812, and a new charter was granted for \$120,000. This expired October 1, 1831.

At the time of the Colonel's death, he had one hundred and eighty shares in Saco Bank. This seems to have been almost a family bank, several members and connections of his family being directors at different times, among them being Thomas Cutts, Thomas Cutts, Jr., T. G. Thornton, Foxwell Cutts, Richard Cutts, Dominicus Cutts, James B. Thornton and Moses Emery.

When the Colonel retired from the presidency of Saco Bank in 1811, he entered into a co-partnership with Josiah Calef, a young iron merchant of Boston, and formed the "Saco Iron Works Company." This was the first manufacturing company on the island. The company was to manufacture "Hoops, Nail Plates, Nail and Spike Rods, Nails or Brads, Tacks and such other Iron work as they might thereafter think proper to engage in." The Colonel sold Mr. Calef one-half of a mill privilege for \$550, subject to restrictions, and they agreed "to own halves and in that proportion to divide expenses, profits and losses." The cost of buildings and machinery, up to January 13, 1812, was \$14,329.86. During the year improvements were made amounting to \$1,517.44. On June 27, 1820, Thomas Cutts, Josiah Calef and their associates were incorporated into a company to carry on the manufacture of nails or any other manufacture of iron and steel in Saco, and were authorized to hold real estate not exceeding \$50,000 and personal not over \$100,000. (Chapter 15, Special Laws of Maine 1820.) Before this only wrought iron nails were used, which were made by blacksmiths and of course were very expensive. The company made what are called cut nails, making (Folsom says) 3,500 pounds a day. This was afterward increased to 5,500 pounds. An old gentleman has told me that the old nail factory made a great noise and clatter when running, and that a team of four oxen — there were no horse teams then — was used in carrying nails to the Ferry in the winter and bringing back iron for the company.

It is remarkable that Col. Cutts' great-grandson should have married the daughter of his partner, Mr. Calef.

In all I have written, I have spoken only of the Colonel's business ability. He was more than a superior business man, he was a good citizen. He was Selectman from 1767 to 1769, chairman of the board in 1771, and Town Treasurer from 1772 to 1794. He was Representative to the General Court in 1780 and was Councillor of Massachusetts in 1810. (It is highly probable that while in Boston, attending to his official duties, he met Josiah Calef and arranged to start the Iron Works.) To fill these various offices must have been a great sacrifice to the Colonel, as he had without them more business than one man ought to assume.

When the first parish meeting house was built, Col. Cutts in 1805 gave a bell made by Paul Revere and which weighed one thousand pounds. This church, which was dedicated Feb. 12, 1806, was for a long time considered the largest and most elegant in Maine, being ninety feet long and fifty-four feet



COLONEL THOMAS CUTTS

From a portrait in York Institute



broad, with a spire one hundred and twenty-six feet in height and costing about \$18,000, with massive timbers and so intricately framed that it was said no one but the architect could put it together. Inside, it was adorned with elaborate carvings all done with a common pocket-knife.

Three sides were surrounded with galleries containing pews. Singing seats were in a circle around and above the pulpit, which stood out a little in the body of the church and over which hung the old-fashioned sounding board suspended by an iron rod. In front and around the pulpit were arranged high panelled pews, the particular pride and comfort of the fathers. There was an organ, and a church clock on the wall, and Mr. Owen says that, best of all, in the belfry swung a grand bell given by Col. Cutts. In the spire of this church was the lantern, a room surrounded with glass. From this lookout could be seen Portland, the beach, and the White Mountains.

The former Treasurer of Bowdoin College, Mr. McKeen, told me that people came long distances to see this meeting-house and that it was considered the finest piece of architecture in Maine.

Parson Elihu Whitcomb in his dedication sermon on February 12, 1806, says:

It is a laudable desire in man to wish to live (if I may so speak) after he is dead; and to perpetuate his existence in the minds of posterity by noble and generous deeds. So long then as this society shall here assemble, so long as posterity shall here assemble, at the tone of that bell, the name of *Cutts* ought to be held in honorable remembrance.

The church was burned on Sunday, July 8, 1860, and the bell melted and was destroyed, but I see no reason why the name of Col. Thomas Cutts should not still be held in honorable remembrance.

The bell was used on all public occasions and was tolled at funerals. When General Cyrus King, Senator John Fairfield, and other good people of Saco died, this bell announced the fact, and my aunt said that when Col. Cutts died it tolled all day. She was a little girl but remembered the long funeral procession. The tongue was preserved and is in York Institute now.

At the time of the fire Oliver Batts, the sexton, did not hear the alarm, and when he was told the next day that the church was burned, he said, "Why, no, it hasn't; I've got the key right in my pocket."

Col. Cutts believed in education and petitioned, with others, the General Court for an Academy in Saco. He was the first

petitioner, and the first incorporator in the charter, which was granted February 16, 1811. He was so well known and so highly respected that his name carried great weight in the General Court. He was the first President of the Board of Trustees and was one of the first and largest contributors to the



funds. In the history of Bowdoin College at the head of the charter list of overseers, stand the names of the brothers Edward Cutts of Kittery and Thomas Cutts of Saco, "names at that time eminently aristocratic" as the history states. He was also a corporator of the Massachusetts General Hospital.

He was very kind to the unfortunate, and when he laid down a barrel of beef or pork for himself, he laid down another for the poor.

Mr. Seth Storer said that his boy Henry, when six or seven years old, saw Col. Cutts in his father's office one day. He afterwards asked his father if he, Col. Cutts, "was not a very good man. I thought he looked like a good man." The boy was right; he was a good man in every sense of the word.

In a letter to his son, Capt. Thos. Cutts, Jr., March 7, 1792, the Colonel concludes, "I hope this will find you and your crew in a good state of health, and that your conduct will be such as to meet the approbation of your Divine Master."

The Colonel was fortunate in having a good wife, and their children in having an affectionate mother.

If the Academy had been chartered and the admirable public school system we have today in Saco had been established, I have no doubt that the Colonel, using the same good judgment he showed all through his life, would have educated his children at home.

But there were no such schools in the Colonel's day. Indeed, as late as 1809, the Kennebunk Gazette has a standing advertisement, "Teacher wanted," etc., showing that it was difficult to secure an instructor. So the Colonel and his wife sent their boys to Andover Academy, and his son Richard (afterwards Member of Congress) then went to Harvard College, and their daughters were educated in Boston.

Among Mr. Benjamin N. Goodale's treasures is a letter from Mrs. Cutts to her son Thomas which is as follows:

"Pepperrell<sup>o</sup> Jany. 18, 1785.

Dear Thos.

I am favored with an opportunity to write you, by Mr. Gray. I wish you to write me particularly on Mr. Gray's return. Your papa, brothers,



MADAM ELIZABETH CUTTS

*From a portrait in York Institute*



sisters & all friends here are well. I hope you, your brother & all acquaintances at Andover are the same.

You may enquire of Mr. Gray, the particulars respecting an addition of a new elder brother who has taken your second sister and is to carry her soon to Berwick to reside where you will call and put up as you come home in your vacation. Bring us accounts of how it fareth with them — in the mean time improve your mind by a careful attention to your studies — and dare to excel in Learning that when your papa and I do see you we may have the comfort to behold part of a promising offspring. My respects to your Preceptor, regards to Mr. & Mrs. Abbott. Love to you, well wishes to all. I remain

Your tender & affectionate

mama, Elizb Cutts.

Mr. Goodale also has a receipt which reads as follows:

Received of Mr. Cutts fourteen pounds fourteen shillings in full for one Quarter's board & Instruction of Miss Eunice ended the 15th ult. including 6£ Stationery 12£ cash lent and a rise of 4£ per week on the board occasioned by great advances on rent etc. etc.

Eleanor Druitt.

The young ladies wrote a beautiful hand, and showed great respect for their parents, as the following letters from the Colonel's daughters show:

Honrd Papa,

I have so much anticipated the felicity of seeing my Dr Mama & yourself on your return home, that being deprived that pleasure, I call it a great disappointment. I am exceedingly anxious to know how you sir & mama got home & whether the cancer is got better, as I hope it is entirely eradicated.

I have been to get the Coat Arms prepared for working, and Mr. Gore shewed me two Arms by the name Cutts, the one belonging to a Family from London, and the other from Chelsea, both Arms different; and Papa as you chuse I should work your Arms, I should be fond of making no mistake & of working the right, if your business permitted your letting me know by name the right one, it would be sufficient, without further trouble, as my utmost abilities shall be exerted to please Mama & yourself sir in the working. I am surprised at Sister's silence I shall only add that if her sentiments correspond with mine, I should not want the addition of a partial affection, to give weight to what I say — It will always give me unspeakable delight to hear from all the family as I shall ever be interested in what concerns them.

Be pleased sir to offer my dutiful compliments to Mama and accept the same yourself — with love to Brothers & Sisters — Believe me to be

Your dutiful Daughter,

Boston

Elizabeth Cutts.

April 22<sup>nd</sup> 1783.

[The Cutts Coat of Arms worked in silk, in York Institute, was doubtless made by Miss Elizabeth. Her husband Richard was a long-time member of General Court.]

Hon<sup>rd</sup> Papa & Mama,

I embrace this favorable opportunity of acquainting you I am perfectly well & very happily situated.

Give me leave to assure my dear Papa & Mama it shall be my constant study to make improvements sufficient to compensate for all the trouble & expenses I am sensible I put you both to. I shall be extremely obliged to my dear Mama to be so kind as to send me a skirt & some stockings, anything from Mama will be gratefully received from her loving daughter.

I have nothing more to add but to request my love to brothers and sisters. Mr. & Mrs. Druitt desires their most respectful compliments to you both.

Believe me to be with the greatest respect & esteem,

Your ever dutiful and obedient daughter

Newburyport,  
Novr 9, 1779.

Mary Cutts.

[Mary Cutts married Samuel Abbott.]

Hon<sup>rd</sup> & Dear Mama,

I never was much happier than as I was sitting thinking of you, my Dr Papa and the family to be agreeably surprised by Cap<sup>n</sup> Tarbox who gave me every information of the dearest family on earth, and presented me with one pair blankets, some green baize & some money. Likewise informed Mrs. Druitt (who desires most respectful compliments to Papa and yourself Madam) of Coffee and Sugar for her. I work and mean to exert my utmost industry early and late, to accomplish my work with other things to sit and enjoy the pleasure of my dear parents company the greatest pleasure this world can afford.

Mama be pleased to present my most dutiful respects to my dear Papa & thank him for all his kind attention to his absent daughter & be pleased Madam to accept my most grateful thanks for all yours.

Be so good as to make my love to my brothers and sisters & Believe me  
Hon<sup>rd</sup> Mama

Your most Obligated and  
Obedient Daughter  
to Command,

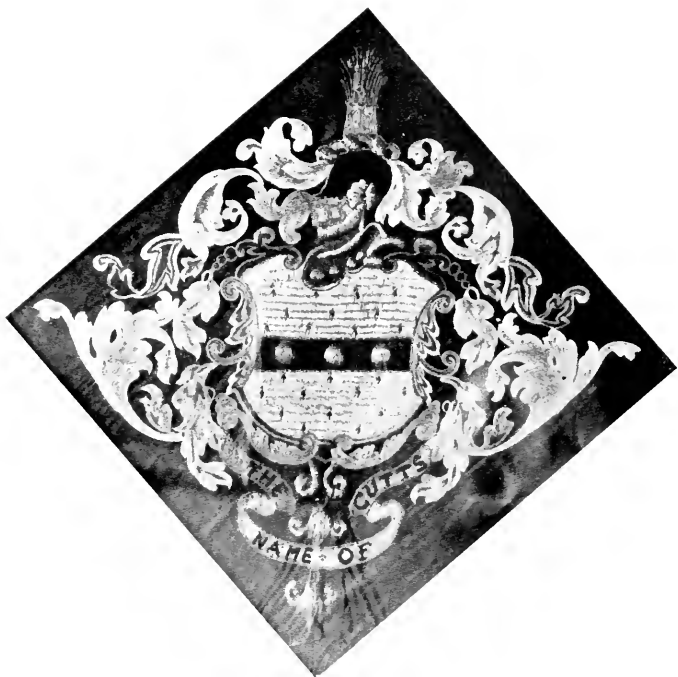
Boston, Jan. 14, 1792.

Sarah Cutts.

[Sarah married Dr. Thos. G. Thornton, Marshal of Maine.]

Mrs. Cutts made a pall for the town. This was a large black cloth used to cover a coffin at funerals. A table was covered with a white cloth which reached to the floor. The coffin was placed upon this, and the pall covered the coffin. The bier was just outside the door. Sometimes they had four honorary pall bearers holding the four corners of the pall — one at each corner, and the under bearers carried the bier. They had no hearses in those days. The remains were borne by the bearers to the grave, the grave filled and the bier left on top of the grave till the next funeral.

Col. Cutts however had a tomb in the old burying ground in the rear of the Unitarian Meeting House.



CUTTS ARMS

Original, embroidered in colors, is in York Institute



Benjamin Simpson in his Journal Nov. 24, 1796, says, "Thursday digging tomb for Col<sup>a</sup> Cutt." Then a number of entries till Saturday, October 28, 1797, "Laid Bricks Col. Cutts tomb." "Monday to Falls took up the remains of Samuel Abbott & his wife, and a child of Dr. Thornton's and deposited them in a tomb of Col. Cutts."

After Mrs. Cutts died, a queer letter was sent to their daughter, Miss Eunice Cutts. On account of the quaintness and the evident sincerity of the writer, a copy of the letter follows:

To Col. Cutts Family,

Please to accept an imperfect tho' sincere tribute of Respect to the memory of the deceased who was placed in the Golden Candlestick in this family and whose light hath shone to Distant Climes.

As sympathy is a tender love in the Human Breast we weep with those that weep.

Please to wink at imperfection and except the sincerity of a Friend to this family.

Freeman Harvey.

As I have intimated, Mrs. Cutts was a model wife and mother, and her death was a great loss to her husband and family.

After their boys had been educated, the Colonel took them into partnership, and they went to sea as captains in his vessels, and he assisted them in other ways.

April 18, 1814, he sent word to his son, Capt. Thomas, at the Pool that he should move his vessels up river out of danger, but the captain believed there was no danger, until the English frigate Bulwark came into the Pool, set fire to the hull of a new ship valued at \$8,000, cut a second worth \$7,000 to pieces, and carried away another, which Capt. Cutts ransomed for \$6,000 but which was afterwards lost at sea.

Foxwell Cutts, Esq., the oldest son of Col. Cutts, was largely engaged in navigation for several years previous to the war. His large and costly ships were profitably employed in freighting large cargoes to various parts of the world.

Mr. Cutts built at that period the large mansion-house afterwards occupied by Marshal Thornton.

The reception to Lafayette was in this house, as was probably the one to President Monroe. It was at the corner of Main Street and Thornton Avenue and was afterwards a hotel called the Thornton House. It was burned January, 1851.

This son, Foxwell, afterwards failed in business and died June 6, 1816, aged fifty-one years.

The Colonel bought and gave his widow the house and lot on High Street now owned by Charles H. Hanson.

Foxwell's first wife was Sarah Scanman. After her death, he married Hannah D. Page.

The second son, Thomas Cutts, Jr., was a sea captain and a successful merchant at the Pool. He married Elizabeth Hight and afterwards Mary, the daughter of Hon. Orchard Cook, M.C., who was called "the belle of the East," on account of her beauty and accomplishments.

Richard was a member of Congress and married Anna Payne, a sister of President Madison's wife.

Dominicus was a sea captain and married Polly Chadbourne.

Mary married Samuel Abbott.

Elizabeth married R. F. Cutts.

Eunice married Major Samuel Nye.

Sarah married Marshal Thomas G. Thornton.

Although the Colonel had eight children and all, as I have stated, were married, no direct descendants by the name of Cutts on the male side now live in Saco.

"Nothing remains of the old time but the mansion of Col. Cutts on the crest of the hill, which has defied the storms of twelve decades and promises to stand a long time yet. It was built to stay, as anyone may see from its massive timbers.

"Like his other property it has passed from the family possession, but is regarded with a pride which is shared by every old citizen who holds antiquities and solid work in respect."

The two houses this side of the mansion were the Colonel's smoke house and wash house which have been converted into dwelling houses.

In concluding, I will copy a portion of the Colonel's will, which is characteristic of the man. He gave his children \$81,341 in his life-time, as you may see.

Whereas I Thomas Cutts of Saco, Esquire, have heretofore advanced to my children sums of money, lands and other property which it was my intention should be considered, computed, and charged to them and to the heirs of such of my children as should die before me as part of their respective shares in my estate on the final adjustment and settlement thereof after my decease and it being my desire to do equal and exact justice to all my children and to the heirs of such as are dead without favour or partiality and as far as in my power to prevent all uneasiness and controversies among my heirs in the division of my estate, as well as to promote peace and harmony among them, I therefore do will and ordain that the somes hereinafter mentioned shall be deemed and taken as advancements by settlement made by me in my lifetime to my children respectively and to the heirs of such of my children as are now deceased.

*Firstly*, I have advanced to my daughter Mary Abbott in her lifetime and to her children and heirs since her decease money and personal estate to the full and just value of Eleven Thousand One Hundred and Seventy-two Dollars (\$11,172).

*Secondly*, I have advanced to my sone Foxwell Cutts in his lifetime, money, personal estate and paid debts for him to the full and just value of Thirty Thousand One Hundred and Sixty Dollars not including my indorsements for him at Saco Bank (\$30,160).

*Thirdly*, I have advanced to my daughter Elizabeth Cutts in her lifetime Two Thousand Dollars viz: — Eight Hundred Dollars in Furniture and Twelve Hundred Dollars in cash (\$2,000).

*Fourthly*, I have advanced to my son Thomas Cutts Jr. money and personal & real estate to the full and just value of \$6,807, viz: in vessels and money \$6,807.

*Fifthly*, I have advanced to my son Richard Cutts money & personal & real estate to the full and just value of \$7,257, in vessels, lands & money.

*Sixthly*, I have advanced to my daughter Sally Thornton money and personal and real estate to the full and just value of \$7,800 — (\$7,800).

*Seventhly*, I have advanced to my son Dominicus Cutts money & personal & real estate to the full and just value of \$3,167 — (in the Hercules & in money, \$3,167).

*Eighthly*, I have advanced to my daughter Eunice Nye money & personal & real estate to the full and just value of \$14,878, viz: in Furniture, House & Money \$14,878.

Now therefore for the purpose of fulfilling my said intention as hereinbefore expressed I do give, devise and bequeath after my decease, my just debts etc. being first paid, all my estate real, personal & mixed to my children and their heirs, and to the children and heirs of such as are deceased to have & to hold to them and their respective heirs for their own use forever in the same shares and proportions as they respectively would by law have been entitled to in case I had died intestate. Subject however to the before mentioned several advancements, and to such further advancements, as I may hereafter make to them or either of them and charge them with.

Thomas Cutts.

[Dated July 6, 1816. Witnessed by Wm. P. Preble, I. Lane, Daniel Granger.]

Colonel Cutts died January 10, 1821.

His remains and those of his wife have been removed from his tomb and buried on the lot of his grandson, Hon. Joseph T. Nye, on Pine Avenue, Laurel Hill Cemetery, Saco, and stones to their memory have been erected by Mrs. Caroline Augusta (Thornton) Batchelder, his granddaughter.







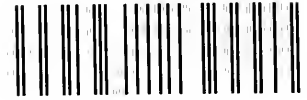


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